

REMARKS

Claims 1-4, 6, 8-11 and 13-25 are pending in this application. For the reasons set forth below, Applicants believe that the rejection should be withdrawn and that all currently pending claims are in condition for allowance.

REJECTION OF CLAIMS 1-4, 6, 8-11 AND 13-25 UNDER 35 U.S.C. 103(a)

The Examiner rejected Claims 1-4, 6, 8-11 and 13-25 under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 4,800,623 to Brockhaus ("Brockhaus") in view of one of U.S. Patent No. 6,554,524 to Smith, U.S. Patent No. 3,827,820 to Hoffman, U.S. Patent No. 1,984,350 to Halsey et al., or U.S. Patent 933,625 to Clackson.

In particular, the Examiner alleged that Brockhaus describes "a first hinge leaf 3 hingedly connected to a second hinge leaf 1 by a pivot pin 13, the pivot pin being immovably mounted in one hinge leaf and being rotatably mounted in, and being axially withdrawable from, the other hinge leaf." The hinge pin 2 has a smooth, cylindrical, circumferential surface in an upper hinge pin section and an end area that is provided with a screw thread 13. Column 5, lines 25-30. There is a "nonrotative connection of the hinge half 3 with the hinge pin 2." Column 6, lines 34-35. The hinge pin 2 is rotatably supported in hinge eye 4 of the first hinge half 1 and "is fixed against movement in the axial direction by means of a safety element 9." Column 5, lines 16-21. Brockhaus describes that hinge half 3 has a nonrotative connection with the hinge pin 2 and that the hinge pin 2 is rotatably supported in hinge half 1, but not axially withdrawable from hinge half 1. Thus, Brockhaus does not describe a pivot pin that is both rotatably mounted in and axially withdrawable from one of the hinge leaves, as required by claim 1.

Moreover, there is no reason to modify the hinge assembly so that the pivot pin 2 is rotatably supported by hinge half 3. The pivot pin 2 is already rotatably supported by hinge half 1 so making it rotatably supported by hinge half 3 would be redundant.

None of the other cited references describe a vehicle hinge assembly having a pivot pin which is fixedly secured in one hinge leaf and rotatably received and axially withdrawable from another hinge leaf.

In light of the foregoing, claim 1 is patentable over the cited references. Claims 2-4, 6, 8-11, and 13-25 depend from claim 1 and are patentable for at least the same reasons as claim 1.

CONCLUSION

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing remarks. If there are any issues that can be resolved via a telephone conference, the Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned at 404.685.6799. No fees are believed due, however, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees that may be due or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 11-0855.

Respectfully submitted,

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